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ABSTRACT

Trends within the educational system of Sweden which increase the existence and/or potential of democratization are examined in this monograph. The process of democratization is interpreted as referring to educational objectives such as equal opportunity, as well as to structural changes within the system which increase the likelihood that stated goals will be achieved. The document is presented in nine chapters. Chapter one introduces the scope of the study (elementary and secondary education, higher education, and adult/continuing education). Chapter two explains how the comprehensive school system was introduced and examines how students are channeled into different courses of study according to their interests and abilities after basic education is completed at age 16. Chapters three and four focus on some of the problems of this differentiation process, including equal opportunities for both sexes, separation according to theoretical and/or practical orientation, changing a track after an extended period of time in one study program, and variation of standards among schools. Chapter five elaborates on extra provisions for underprivileged populations. Chapters six and seven examine the relationship between school and working life and analyze how parents, community groups, educators, and administrators can work together more cooperatively. Chapter eight investigates recurrent education. The final chapter summarizes preceeding chapters. Conclusions are that although some evidence is found of equalization of educational opportunities (i.e., the between-school differences in educational standards have been reduced and access to upper-secondary education has been increased), most advances toward a democratized education have come about as a result of measures taken to democratize Swedish society at large. (DB)

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THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF EDUCATION IN SWEDEN

A Unesco Case Study

November 1980

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Preface

For some years Unesco has been running a project on "Democratization of Education". In Unesco´s Approved Programme of Budget for 1979-1980 funds were provided under paragraph 1011 for continuing studies of this subject.

With a view to implementing this work plan, Unesco´s Secretariate wrote to the Swedish Government in March 1979, and asked for the indication of a research institute in Sweden which might undertake one of four studies planned to be carried out during 1979. The Secretariate stated the following objectives of the study:

> "These studies - while paying attention in particular to the needs of children belonging to underprivileged groups of the population - should identify factors underlying persistent disparities in education, such as those concerning conditions of access to education, the duration, content and forms of teaching. As these studies are furthermore expected to deal with measures to associate educational institutions more closely with the life of the society, special consideration will have to be given to the role which the introduction of productive work into the educational process can play in the democratisation of education.
>
> Sweden seems to be engaged in a continuous reform process of the educational system, paying attention to recurrent education which might contribute to the democratisation of education."

The Swedish Unesco Commission asked me to make this study, which I agreed to. The Unesco Secretariate was informed about this, and the Secretariate then gave me further technical instructions about the work, according to which the report should not exceed 40 standard pages (approximately 13 000 words) and be completed by the end of October 1979.

The report was completed and sent to the Unesco Secretariate on October 23, 1979. In a letter to me of November 9 the Secretariate approved the content of the report.

In a letter of May 30, 1980, the Secretariate informed me that the report

was being translated into French and Spanish to be distributed to documentation centres, regional Unesco Offices for education and teacher training institutions. As a reply to a question of mine about the publication of the report, the Secretariate informed me that no obstacles existed to include the report in the series "Studies in Comparative and International Education" at the Institute of International Education, University of Stockholm, which is hereby done. Only some minor technical changes have been made.

Stockholm, October 1980

Sixten Marklund

1 INTRODUCTION

The author of this paper was invited by Unesco to undertake an investigation of the democratization of education, using Sweden as a case study. According to the short guidelines given, the study should pay particular attention to the needs of children belonging to underprivileged groups, to factors underlying disparaties in education, such as conditions of access of education, the duration, content and forms of teaching, and also to measures taken to associate educational institutions with the working life and society at large.

The concepts "democracy" and "democratization" can be defined and interpreted in many ways. Moreover democratization of education can hardly be isolated from democratization of society at large.

The process of democratization, which is broadly outlined in this paper, applies not only to overriding educational goals but also - and indeed primarily - to the structural changes of educational institutions designed to give increased possibilities to achieve these goals. The process of democratization of education is therefore analysed and described as a series of reforms undertaken to change the frameworks within which education takes place. This approach does not start from the assumption that a structural change in itself results in democratization. Rather it maintains only that a certain structure makes it <u>possible</u> to act democratically. The organizational frameworks are not decisive of what finally happens within them, but of what <u>can</u> happen and what <u>cannot</u> happen there. This paper therefore does not seek to determine if and how the school system of Sweden creates democratic human beings. Instead it deals with what has been done to make this educational democratization more possible and probable. It describes the way a comprehensive school system, common to all, was introduced, (Chapter 2) and also the way in which students are diversified into different courses of study after a basic education through free choice of specialization and postponed differentiation (Chapters 3 and 4). Equal opportunity and equal treat-

ment in education are not seen as sufficient for democratization, and thus extra provisions for underprivileged populations are analysed (Chapter 5). New measures to facilitate student and parental participation in the process of education, and to facilitate co-determination by teachers in school administration are also discussed as indicators of democratization (Chapter 6). Finally, an increased linkage of school to working life and society at large is dealt with (Chapter 7). Also some new and partly unforeseen tendences to alternate education and employment in an emerging system of recurrent education are examined (Chapter 8).

2 FROM A DUALISTIC TO A UNIFIED SCHOOL SYSTEM

2.1. The Comprehensivization of Education

During the last three decades the Swedish educational system has continuously been developed towards more democratic forms and more uniformity. The leading ideological and philosophical principle underlying the reforming efforts has been the idea of equality of opportunities, that is the right for everyone to get, as far as possible, education and training after individual desires and talents, regardless of sex and race, and of geographic, economic, social and cultural circumstances and conditions.

Sweden now has a nine-year compulsory comprehensive school for students aged 7-16, known as the "basic school". It includes six years of primary education (grades 1-6) and three years of lower secondary education (grades 7-9). The comprehensive school has nearly one million students.

After this compulsary nine-year school, there is an "integrated" upper-secondary school for students aged 16-19. Integrated here means that academic, technical-vocational and general courses are given in the same institution. Nowadays nearly 90 percent of the students continue to the upper-secondary school. Studies in this non-compulsory school are organized into 22 different "study lines" (specialities or majors) as well as a large number of special courses of varying lengths providing direct vocational preparation. The great majority of upper-secondary students are enrolled in the 22 study lines. These are grouped into three sectors; arts and social subjects, scientific and technical subjects, and economic and commercial subjects. These lines involve two, three or four years of study. Most of them are vocationally oriented. The post-compulsory upper-secondary school currently has about 250 000 students. The number of students in compulsory and post-compulsory schools should be viewed in relation to the fact that Sweden has about 8.3 million inhabitants, with some 100 000 in each one-year age bracket.

The present paper will focus on the nine-year compulsory comprehensive school and the upper-secondary integrated school. It should be noticed that the lower secondary stage is nowadays part of the compulsory system, and therefore organized within this system. The previous secondary school has thus been cut into two parts, a lower-secondary and an upper-secondary, which are wholly separated. The old classification of schools as pre-primary, primary and secondary has in this way been abolished and replaced by a system of pre-compulsory, compulsory and post-compulsory school.

The creation in recent decades of this educational system should be viewed against the background of social development as a whole during the same period. In the mid-1940s, Sweden had a school system which by European standards, was fairly old-fashioned and not particularly extensive. The compulsory elementary school was only six or seven years. After it came various types of lower secondary schools, attended by fewer than one fourth of all elementary school graduates. Only about 10 percent of elementary school students completed a secondary education. Technical and vocational training were correspondingly limited in scale. Fewer than 5 percent of each age bracket attended universities and professional colleges. This is the system from which the current one has developed over a period of three decades.

A first circumstance of significance to reform activities in general has been Sweden's political stability. The dominant political party has been the Social Democrats. Between 1932 and 1976, i.e. for 44 years, they were in power practically without interruption, including brief periods in coalition with other parties. And political stability has had its parallel in a comparatively conflict-free labour market.

An additional factor of importance has been the growth of material prosperity in Sweden during the same period. Using a conventional yardstick such as the Gross National Product (GNP) per capita, Sweden during this period climbed to the top level among industrialized countries.

If material prosperity has facilitated educational reforms, the same can be said of social welfare standards. By means of social welfare legislation

and other kinds of welfare activities, there has been an effort to give everyone a share of social welfare, broadly defined. Unemployment insurance, basic old-age and supplementary income-related pensions, public health and medical care, child allowances and housing allowances are important examples of this. The reform of the educational system all the way from the preschool level to the higher education level may be seen as part of this welfare programme. Educational reforms have been regarded both as a prerequisite and as a consequence of rising standards in general.

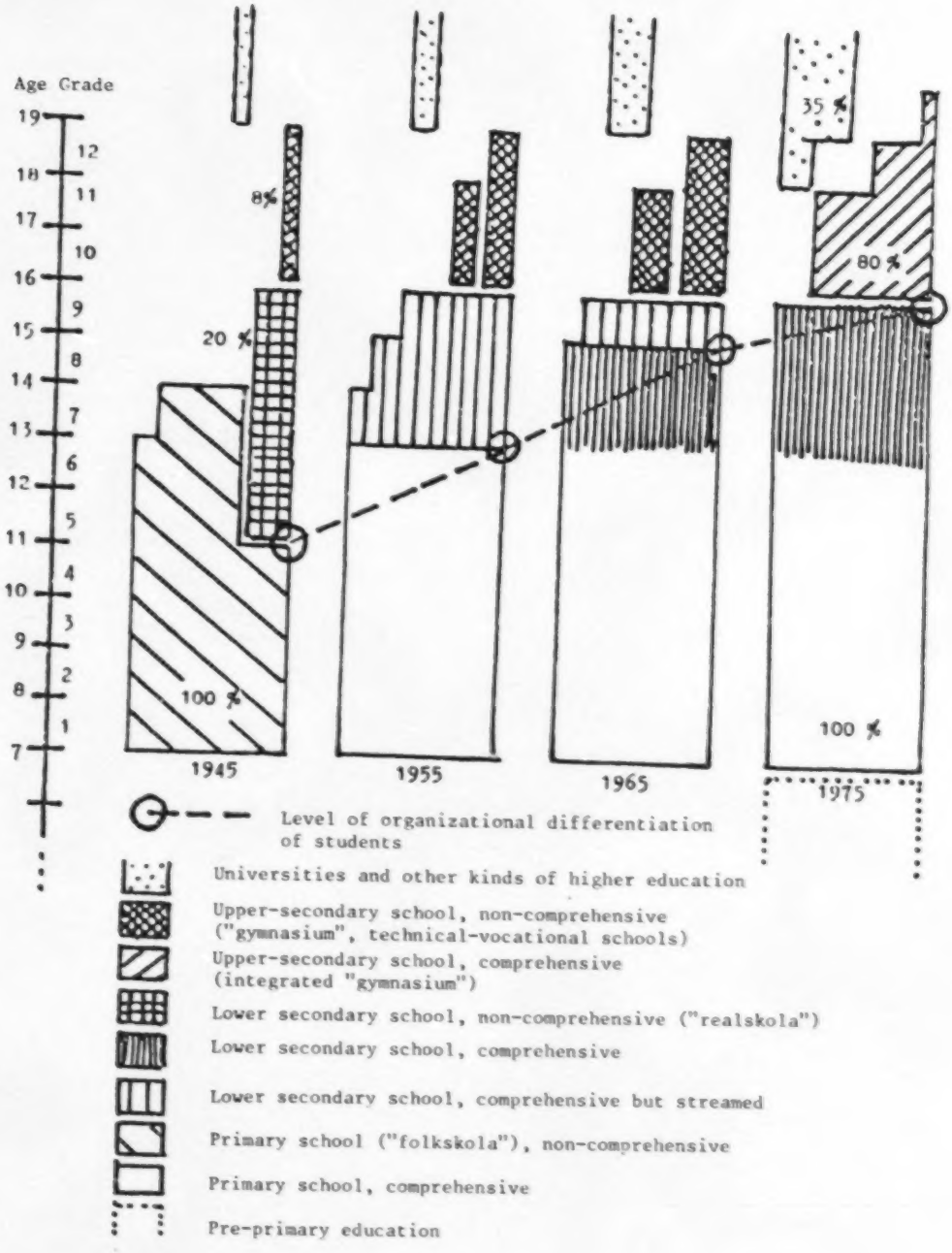
It has sometimes been claimed that social welfare reforms in Sweden, including educational reforms, have been possible or in any event easier because Sweden is a homogeneous country. No real conflicts due to differences in race, religion and language have been thought to exist here. A global comparison undoubtedly provides some support for this viewpoint. But conflicts of this type have not been lacking. Due to a large-scale immigration from other countries to Sweden in the past 15 years, the multiplicity of opinions and value systems has also clearly increased. Every tenth inhabitant of Sweden is now an immigrant. The homogeneity which may once have existed has thus been strongly reduced.

Quite naturally, opinions on how to change and improve the schools and the higher education system have varied in Sweden just as in other countries. During the 1940s, when people bagan to question the traditional dualistic school system, views in Sweden were divided, too. These issues were examined by two major government-appointed commissions. The first of these arrived at the conclusion that the schools could be reformed through improvement and organizational co-ordination of the existing types of schools. The second commission wanted to go further and recommended replacing the prevailing system of parallel schools with a comprehensive school for students up to age 16. The Social Democratic Government presented the issue to the Swedish Parliament in 1950. The legislature decided on a set of guidelines for the continued development of the Swedish school system. According to this decision Sweden was to begin, during an experimental period of about ten years, to implement a new nine-year compulsory comprehensive school. This experimental project was carried out on a growing scale during the years 1950-62, and the project increasingly also included parts of the

post-compulsory school system. By means of a series of parliamentary decisions both during and after this experimental period, there was a gradual transition from the old school system to the new school described briefly in the introduction.

The reform of the compulsory school provided the foundation for subsequent change in upper-secondary education, vocational education, higher education and adult education. Diagramme 1 on page 7 reproduces in a simplified way, what happened in the school system from 1945 to 1975.

Diagramme 1. Development of the Swedish School System from 1945 to 1975.



Notes to Diagramme 1

- 1945 The diagramme describes - in a simplified way - the old Swedish school system with primary and secondary schools totally separated and partly parallel to each other, and with only few students in secondary education.

- 1955 Experiments with the comprehensive school started in 1950 and the school leaving age was gradually raised. Classes in grades 7-9 were mostly streamed, usually with an academic stream, a pre-vocational stream and a general stream. The introduction of technical-vocational schools at the upper-secondary level was started.

- 1965 Parliament decided in 1962 that the comprehensive school should be introduced throughout the country during the ten year period 1962-1972. The level for the organizational diversification of students was set at grade 9 (age of students: 15). New kinds of upper-secondary schools were started.

- 1975 The introduction of the comprehensive school was completed in 1972. Even grade 9 is now non-streamed, following a revision of the national curriculum in 1969. Schools on the upper-secondary level are, since 1970, reorganized into the integrated system with 22 streams, within which a gradual differentiation takes place, with academic, vocational and general streams in the same school.

According to the parliamentary decisions of 1950 and later, the main objective was to raise general level of education. To accomplish this the period of compulsory schooling had to be lengthened. At the same

time, there was a desire to "democratize" the school system, by improving educational opportunities for previously underprivileged groups and by replacing the system of parallel schools at secondary level with a comprehensive system, thereby creating greater equality of educational opportunities. Furthermore, there was a desire to bring about pedagogical innovations in the internal operations of the schools. Practical ("prevocational" and "vocational") training was to receive equal status with theoretical ("academic") training. This set of objectives for the school system comprised both a social and an educational policy programme.

2.2. Access to Education

Nowadays the goal of social equality is mentioned in practically all school laws and school codes throughout the world. But it is implemented in many different ways. An important aspect of social equality in (and by means of) education is whether various social classes have access to education. The decision to introduce the nine-year compulsory basic school throughout the country increased this access in stages. In 1972, this nine year basic school had been completely implemented. The types of previously existing schools at lower secondary level had been abolished at the same pace.

A first and significant step in the efforts to create social equality had thus been taken; everyone had access to a universal system of compulsory schooling to age 16. In corresponding fashion but somewhat later in time, access to post-compulsory education increased. As the compulsory comprehensive basic school grew, recruitment to secondary schooling expanded. The old study lines in the secondary school - the Latin line and the natural science line - were supplemented by a "general line" in 1954. In the early 1960s, these three lines were co-ordinated with the formerly independant technical secondary schools and commercial secondary schools into a new upper-secondary school. At the same time, two-year continuation schools with technical, economic and social study programmes were established as a form of continued education following the new nine-year compulsory comprehensive basic school.

By 1970, recruitment to the existing upper-secondary school (gymnasium) system had risen to about 30 percent of all young people of the appropriate age. At the same time nearly 20 percent attended the new two-year continuation schools. This meant that about half of all young people had access to upper-secondary studies.

Parallel with this, municipal-vocational schools expanded during the decade 1955-1965. Eventually 30-35 percent of the appropriate age bracket attended these schools. Beginning in 1971, a continuing series of reforms co-ordinated the various study programmes within the gymnasium, the continuation schools and most of the municipal vocational schools into a new type of "integrated" upper-secondary school. This school was designed to follow the new nine-year basic school.

The number of students who begin their studies in this "integrated" upper-secondary school each year is now equivalent to about 85-90 percent of all 16-year-olds completing comprehensive school the same year. In 1968, Parliament decided that all comprehensive school graduates should have access to continued education. This aim has been achieved in that nowadays the upper-secondary schools can provide places to everyone who applies to them. But about one third of these applicants are not admitted into the study line which was their first choice, but have to accept their second or subsequent choice.

Sweden has always had problems with uneven distribution of population, long travel distances and the need for boarding arrangements even in compulsory schools. The new nine-year compulsory comprehensive school came to include the lower-secondary level, previously known as the "real-skola", in which the teachers specialize in different subjects. At this level each school needs a certain minimum of students and classes. This may require concentrating students in a limited number of schools, thereby making long journeys necessary even for students in compulsory schools.

The country was divided into comprehensive school districts and upper-secondary school regions. There is thus always a particular basic school

and a particular upper-secondary school for each student. In thinly populated areas, it is common for both basic school students and uppersecondary school students to have to travel up to one hour from home. There are also boarding arrangements for rural students, especially those in upper-secondary school. Each individual region for upper-secondary schooling can not normally offer all study lines with few students in them.

The practical availability of schooling therefore varies. One part of the efforts to achieve social equality has been to provide comprehensive basic school students with free rides on regular public transportation systems or special school vehicles (where appropriate, also free room and board). Upper-secondary school students who need transportation or room and board receive special grants regardless of the economic status of their families in addition to the general study allowance paid to everyone.

3 THE PROBLEM OF DIFFERENTIATION

3.1. Free Choice of Specialization

One of the objectives specified in the 1950 parliamentary decision on the future development of the schools, and one that has often been repeated since then in school legislation and official curricula, was that the choice of study programme should be a free one. The intention is thus that each student and his/her parents should choose a study programme from among those provided in the schools operated by the public authorities. A student should thus not be ordered by teachers or the principal to take a particular programme or subject. Free choice of studies became one of the cornerstones of the democratization of education in the 1962 Education Act. The practical implementation of this principle has had far-reaching consequences for the structure and function of the schools and the educational system.

One important consequence was that the concepts of Pass and Fail were removed from the compulsory school system. The basic school system should be organized in such a way that it encourages the all-round development of the individual. In other words, the aim of studies should be formulated on the basis of the needs of each student. Another aspect of free choice is that repeating of grades has almost entirely disappeared from the schools. There are a few instances of students repeating a year, but as a rule only at the students' own request, usually in connection with a voluntary change of study programme. A prerequisite for free choice is more adequate educational and vocational guidance in the schools and expanded practical work training and vocational orientation periods outside the school as well.

3.2. Postponed Differentiation

Sweden is not alone in lengthening the period of compulsory schooling to age 16. This has been done in most industrialized countries since World War II. Nor is Sweden unique in its efforts to incorporate lower secondary school into its compulsory school system. But Sweden and her Scandinavian neighbours seem to be alone in having consistently postponed tracking (streaming) of secondary school students into separate categories avoiding any kind of "elite" classes in sciences, languages or other things of specializations, until after they have completed compulsory schooling, i.e. age 16. Yet, a certain amount of room for elective subjects is given to students from age 13 beyond those subjects common to all of them. In addition, from age 13, students may choose between easier or harder course alternatives in foreign languages and mathematics. But the main principle is that until the end of their compulsory schooling, students are kept together in undifferentiated and heterogeneously composed classes, and that regardless of their choice of electives and course types in the compulsory school, they can choose either theoretical (academic) or practical (technical, vocational, general) study lines in their subsequent postcompulsory schooling.

The postponement of tracking, which in Sweden has been seen as one of the major steps towards democratization, came in several stages (see diagramme 1 on page 9). During the experimental period of the new nine-year basic school in the 1950s, most experimental schools divided up the students from age 13 into various classes based on their choice of electives. Foreign languages were often the criterion for classification. A distinction was made in the 1950s between students with two, one or (at that time) no foreign languages. The two-language students (there were also classes with three languages) ordinarily also had advanced classes in mathematics, physics chemistry and Swedish, thus constituting a kind of "realskola" within the framework of the new experimental school. When the pilot programme was later evaluated by a School Commission appointed in 1957 by the Government at Parliament's request, it was not the problem in these favored classes which received special attention. Instead, the commission found it most important to solve the problems of the students in other,

less favored classes. The result of all these considerations was that in 1962 Parliament determined that eight of the nine grades in the basic school should be untracked. Not until the ninth grade would students be divided into different study programmes, of which one (9g) was preparatory to upper-secondary school (gymnasium), some were vocationally oriented, and others had a more general character. The experience of the first few years of the 1962 school was, in some respects, surprising. In planning, it was assumed that about one third of the comprehensive basic school students in grade 9 would choose 9g, i.e. the theoretically oriented, pre-uppersecondary programme in the final year. It soon turned out that the number of students in 9g exceeded this proportion. After only a few years, half of all students were choosing this programme. Toward the end of the 1960s, two out of three students chose 9g. In other words, 9g was flooded with students while some of the other programmes, mostly non-academic, were chosen by so few students that they could not be organized. The shift towards theoretical - or academic - alternatives appears to have been due to a desire by students finishing compulsory school to leave open all the alternative choices for subsequent studies at upper-secondary school.

Obviously, it was difficult to satisfy the students' free choice in the compulsory grades 7-9 while at the same time dividing up students into various study programmes in their subsequent schooling in accordance with other, more general principles. In 1968, the Government and Parliament in Sweden accepted the consequences of this trend by abolishing the tracking system also in grade 9 and thus in the compulsory school as a whole. Instead, it was made possible for students in grade 7 to begin a second foreign language (German or French) in addition to English or else technology, economics or art. But the novelty was mainly in the fact that these four alternatives became essentially equivalent in value for purposes of admission to subsequent non-compulsory schooling. There was no longer any 9g which was "better" than other programmes.

This meant that the nine-year compulsory comprehensive basic school had become entirely untracked, which was regarded as a victory for the efforts of achieving social equality. But it also meant that, more than previously,

individualization problems were moved from the administrative level to the internal, pedagogical level.

The issue of when and how students in the compulsory school should be divided up into different study programmes - tracking or streaming - was the most widely discussed issue throughout the experimental period in the 1950s. There were two traditional viewpoints on this. One was that at an early stage, and no later than age 12-13, students should be divided up into so-called theoretical and practical orientations. The other viewpoint was that such tracking should take place as late as possible, preferably not until after compulsory schooling, i.e. at age 16. The issue was closely interwined with that of free choice. Should students and their parents be allowed to choose freely, or should the school and its teachers be able to create special requirements for certain choices and thereby themselves carry out the distribution of students into various study programmes? As in the 1950 parliamentary set of principles, the 1962 decision was that students should have free choice.

The issue of tracking was also closely connected with the question of how to assign marks to students for their performance in their studies. Should any marks be given at all in the compulsory school and, if so, should marks be based on a fixed scale of achievement ("absolute marks") or on a ranking scale ("relative marks")? The curricula published in 1962 and 1969 have resulted in a major reduction in the use of marks at primary levels, and in some schools marks have d sappeared entirely at these levels because the local school board has abolished them. But in grades 7-9 of the compulsory school, i.e. at lower secondary level, marks are still used. Final marks are also crucial to students who have chosen a study line at upper-secondary school where the number of places is smaller than the number of applicants and a selection is therefore necessary. There is a five-point scale of marks, on which 1 is lowest and 5 is highest on a relative basis for the country as a whole. To help arrive at norms for assigning marks, nationally standardized tests are given in Swedish, foreign languages and mathematics in the comprehensive basic school. At the upper-secondary level, standardized tests are administrated

at all schools throughout the country in a number of additional theoretical skill subjects. These tests are compulsory only in the upper-secondary school. The establishment of these rules in 1962 was based on compromise within the governmental school commission which in 1957 was asked to evaluate the experimental programmes. According to this compromise, known as the Visby Agreement of 1960, tracking of compulsory school students would not take place until their final year. But this tracking would be preceded by a free choice of subjects and courses during the two grades preceding the final year.

The Visby compromise was accepted by the teachers' organizations, except for teachers in secondary-level academic subjects. They wanted tracking during the entire lower secondary stage, i.e. grades 7-9, into different classes based on electives. According to their proposal students in the nine-year school would all be heterogeneously grouped in the same class only during grade 1-6, and after that they would be divided into study programmes. This proposal of an early differentialtion received parliamentary support only from the Conservative party. The other political parties mainly followed the Visby compromise, which thus became the basis for Parliament's decision. As mentioned above, a subsequent parl amentary decision in 1969 entirely abolished tracking in grade 9. Public debate on tracking since then has gone in waves, sometimes lively and sometimes subdued. But it has never died out completely.

3.3. Equal Opportunities for Both Sexes

Efforts to achieve equality between the sexes are a good example of how, in redistribution policy, we must expect confrontations between deeply rooted values and traditions within the family and society as to what kinds of social equality and equal opportunity we can and should aim for.

Among the first measures the educational system has consistently tried to enforce is opening all types of education to both sexes and seeking recruitment of both male and female teachers and other officials in the schools. Special girls' schools existed until the end of the 1960s and were finally abolished when the comprehensive basic school was introduced. All classes are now co-educational. Another step has been to provide the schools with a selection of subjects and courses without regard to sex. In the compulsory school, boys and girls study the same subjects. Boys and girls receive instruction in wood and metal crafts as well as textile crafts. Boys have the same home economics courses as girls.

In practice, efforts to achieve equality are often in conflict with free choice. Most of the subjects taught in the comprehensive basic school are compulsory, but in grades 7-9 students may choose electives for 15-20 percent of their time. Boys and girls often make different choices then. Boys choose technology, while girls choose art and economics. The same is true of choosing study lines in the upper-secondary school after age 16. Girls there are in majority in the nursing line, the home economics line, and the clothing manufacturing line, while boys are correspondingly overrepresented in the motor engineering line, the electro-technical line and the workshop line.

Experience tells us that equality between the sexes in these study lines cannot be reconciled with freedom of choice. Proposals have recently been made to introduce sex quotas. Under such a system, students from the minority sex (i.e. boys in the nursing line) would receive priority over students from the majority sex in admissions to studies regardless of other qualifications such as gradepoint averages or relevant experience.

Within the higher education system, a kind of sex quota is already being used in certain cases. In choosing students for training as pre-school teachers, male applicants are accepted in proportion to their share of total applicants, regardless of whether their formal qualifications are lower than those of female applicants. The same is true of nursing school.

4. SOME EFFECTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVIZATION OF EDUCATION

4.1. Transfer to Upper-Secondary Academic Training

Democratization of education is defined and understood in many ways. One of the least controversal interpretations is, that students from lower socio-economic groups should attend academic studies as often as their equally gifted comrades from higher socio-economic groups. The first experience in this respect of the new school were somewhat surprising. The abolition of some entrance restrictions to upper-secondary academic schools ("gymnasium") gave new chances. But the first to take advantage of these were the medium-gifted or low-gifted upper class children, who in a selective system had fallen under the level of entrance requirements. Thus "the dull son of the doctor" took the chances before "the bright son of the worker". Not until a dozen of years later did the intended equalization start. The simple opening of opportunities was not enough. More information was needed, and it was necessary with economic support and social support for the working class on a broader scale.

In the Swedish study comparisons were made between three different year cohorts of students born in 1934, 1948 and 1953 (Härnquist and Bengtsson, 1972). The criterion was the percentage of students, that every year transferred from elemantary and lower secondary education to upper-secondary academic (pre-university) education. Students born in 1934 had passed through the old system, "folkskola" plus "realskola". Students born in 1948 were mixed, some having gone through the old system and some through the new comprehensive school. Students born in 1953 were also mixed, but with a majority for comprehensive school students. Socio-economically the students were divided into three groups: Upper, Middle and Lower. As entrance to the "gymnasium" was based on student marks from previous school and as these were socially biassed, the students were split into three groups,

Mark 3 indicating under the medium, Mark 4 the medium and Mark 5 over the medium for the applicants. (The technical problems of how to equalize socio-economic status and marks over the time are here left aside).

The results of this study are given in Table 1. Some equalization seems to have come, but the social differences in choice of upper-secondary studies mostly remain. During a period of 20 years the differences that originally appeared mainly between the upper class and the rest, gradually turned over into a difference between upper and middle classes on the one hand and the lower class on the other. In addition, the differences have moved downwards on the scale of marks, so that social background now has greatest significance around or just above the average level, where the transfer rate was previously of very little importance.

As can be seen from the table there has been some success in removing social differences in recruitment to theoretically biassed upper-secondary studies among students with high marks. This success, however, has been at the price of greater social distinction in recruitment among students at lower levels of performance, a result, however, which is not evident from the table.

Table 1. Upper secondary school entry rate as a percentage in different social groups broken down according to school marks (male students).

	Students born 1934	Students born 1948	Students born 1953
Entrance mark 3;			
Upper class students	36	55	75
Middle class students	3	25	41
Lower class students	1	12	24
Entrance mark 4;			
Upper class students	65	88	97
Middle class students	18	58	84
Lower class students	10	45	65
Entrance mark 5;			
Upper class students	85	100	100
Middle class students	42	91	98
Lower class students	35	87	90

When the pessimist says, that equalizing did not occur, the optimist says: it has started, it takes time, but it is coming. The overall evaluation is somewhere between those two; the new school will help also working class students, but it is only one of many necessary changes. The criterion used in the study can also be discussed: attitudes to academic studies have changed over the time in Sweden, academic studies are no longer seen as prestegeous and necessary as before, some technical-vocational streams have become popular alternatives. The social variable has also changed: difference in salary and living conditions between upper and lower classes are smaller now than before.

4.2. Equality of School Standards

Another important question is if the comprehensivization of the Swedish school has given the same kind of opportunity in all parts of the country, for students in different schools and different regions. Sweden was in this respect compared with a number of other countries in an international project called "International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement" (IEA), run at the International Institute of Education, University of Stockholm. It encompassed achievement in seven school subjects in altogether nineteen countries for students of age 10, 14 and 18 years. (All subjects were not tested in all countries).

Some results of this study are presented in Table 2, where results in science in nine countries in 1970 are seen. A first conclusion of this is that Swedish students are as good as students in other countries. The critizism, rather frequently heard in Sweden, that the school reform has lowered the standard of achievement gets no support from this (there is no reason to believe that the old school with a lower leaving age gave a higher national result).

Table 2. Results of achievement tests in science in nine countries in 1970 (Husén, 1973, and National Board of Education, 1978)

Country	Student achievement				Between-school variance in percent of student variance.	
	Mean-score	Variance	Mean-score	Variance		
	10 years		14 years		10 years	14 years
England	15.7	8.5	21.3	14.1	19	33
Finland	17.5	8.2	20.5	10.6	28	20
Germany (FRG)	14.9	7.4	23.7	11.5	27	30
Hungaria	16.7	8.0	29.1	12.7	40	34
Japan	21.7	7.7	31.2	14.8	18	20
Netherlands	15.3	7.6	17.8	10.0	23	40
Scotland	14.0	8.3	21.4	14.2	29	43
Sweden	18.3	7.3	21.7	11.7	15	12
USA	17.7	9.3	21.6	11.6	32	28

This fear for a deterioration of results through opening of the schools for all, is nowadays an everyday concern in the school debate in many countries.

However, in terms of equality the two right columns of the table are here most interesting. Mean scores of single schools vary in all countries. There are schools with high results and schools with low results. The proportion of this variance of the total national variance is considerably lower in Sweden than in the other countries (only 15 and 12 percent). The Swedish schools are mutually more alike than other countries' schools. The distinction of "good" schools and "bad" schools is hardly a problem in Sweden.

That distinction was quite obvious in the old dualistic non-comprehensive system. Yet this movement in Sweden towards a democratization of education does not seem to have reduced the individual variance. Sweden has roughly the same proportion of "poor" students and "good" students as the other countries in the table, but these students are not concentrated in specific schools to as great extent as in the other eight countries.

5 SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

5.1 Central and Local Financing

The achievement in Sweden of a uniform school system and an equivalent standard of schooling for the whole country after World War II should be related to the way in which the educational system is governed and financed.

The Swedish school system is usually conceived of as a centralized one. The political decisions in the school sector are implemented by the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs and by an autonomous civil service department, the National Board of Education. According to the standing instructions laid down for the Board, its duties are chiefly of a service character. It is called upon to assist the local authorities in their work of shaping the school. For practical purposes the most essential tasks for the Board are perceived to be the preparation of annual national budget estimates for the school system, the continuous revision of central curricula, the in-service training of school staff, the allocation of funds and the central planning and administration of school research. Added mention must be made of the Board's importance for disseminating information about experiences gained in different parts of the country and about new decisions which are taken on the basis of empirical and investigative findings.

Under the National Board of Education there are County Education Boards, which are regional arms of the central government in the school sector.

In the municipalities the responsibility for the school rests with the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) which are political bodies appointed by the municipal councils.

Serving as chief executive officer for the school system under the LEA in every municipality is a local superintendent of schools, who directs the work of the school secretariat and who plans and co-ordinates activities

in the different headmaster areas and upper-secondary schools. State subsidies amounting to nearly 100 percent are payable towards the salaries of school superintendents and headmasters. State grants also cover the major part of teacher salaries. Salaries are determined by the outcome of negotiations between the staff unions and the National Collective Bargaining Office. Headmasters and teachers are appointed by state agencies.

Subsidies towards upper-secondary education are also available for other designated staff than teachers and for items of equipment. The state contributes towards the costs of building schools. No building project can get under way unless a state subsidy is voted to finance it.

This strong component of central planning and control aims to achieve a uniform school system and an equivalent standard of schooling for the whole country. Wherever possible, children, young persons and adult students are to be offered the same opportunities regardless of whether they live in a rich or a poor municipality, in a dense urban settlement or in a sparsely settled region.

The municipalities underwrite that portion of the school system costs which is not defrayed out of national revenues. Costs are shared between the state and municipalities as follows: for the compulsory comprehensive school, about 50/50, for the upper-secondary school, about 60/40 on an average. The net school costs amount to about 20 percent of the municipal budget. The state's costs on behalf of comprehensive, upper-secondary and municipal adult education come to about 11 percent of the national budget and currently account for 7 percent of the gross national product.

5.2. Equalization through Special Treatment

A clear shift over the decades in the meaning of the term equality can be noted. During the 1940s and 1950s, it often meant equality in the sense of expanded opportunities for everyone regardless of social class, geographical origins or sex. Open up educational opportunities for everyone,

people said, and a levelling process will automatically take place. Longer schooling for everyone, postponement of tracking into different study programmes, expanded opportunities to attend post-compulsory schools and democratization (broadly defined) of admissions to higher education were regarded as the high road to achieving greater social equality.

It should be noted, however, that this levelling process has both taken a long time and been of a modest scale. The previous, optimistic belief in"equal opportunity" has thus been partially repudiated. This is one of the reasons behind the shift in the definition of social equality since the 1950s. Equality should not be limited to equal opportunities to compete. Nor does it mean that everyone is to receive the same or similar instruction. Special provisions and compensatory measures for the disadvantaged are a necessary part of a school for everyone. Only in one respect does social equality aim at "sameness" among individuals: it tries to provide everyone with the same general, fundamental civic skills, the ability to function as active, contributing members of society, a basic competence in communication, speaking, reading, writing and mathematics, a basic orientation in natural and social sciences and - above all - a belief and confidence in their own worth and their own opportunities to continue a life-long learning process.

5.3. Special Educational Provisions

Underlying this partial change in views on social equality in Sweden is, not least, experience from the immigration wave of recent years. Of the country's 8.3 million inhabitants, nearly one million are now immigrants or children of immigrants, Special educational provisions are needed for them and for other populations in need of support, such as physically and mentally handicapped students, mentally retarded, national minority groups, unemployed youth and students living in isolated areas.

Table 2 gives a list of some of the more important groups of this kind with some statistics of number of students (column No. 2) and forms of

funding special provisions for them (column No. 3-5). The table also holds figures of the interrelationships of these provisions (column No. 6) and their costs per student (column 7). In order to facilitate comparisons of these special provisions with provisions for ordinary education, there are also given corresponding figures for the basic school ("grundskolan") and the upper-secondary school ("gymnasieskolan"). The largest group with special provisions are students in the ordinary school who are subject to special education (row No. 3). Nearly one fourth of the state grant to the basic school goes to this special education. This group consists of slow learners, students with reading and writing disorders, with socio-emotional disturbances. This special education is altogether given in ordinary schools, mostly also in ordinary classes.

Special schools for mentally retarded (row No. 7) and physically handicapped (row No.6) exist. Nomad schools for some of the Laplanders (row No.4) and so-called approved schools (row No. 8) are other examples of special provisions. As can be seen from the table, the costs per student (column No.7) are much higher in these special schools than in the ordinary schools. An exception are the Swedish schools abroad,(row No. 5), where the figure, however, indicates only the state subsidiary to these schools and not the total costs.

Table 2. Costs for ordinary schools and special educational provisions for special populations in Sweden during the fiscal year 1978/1979, costs in US$ (exchange rate 100 SwCr=US$ 23) (The sign .. means that adequate statistics are missing)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Educational provisions	Number of students	Funded by (in 1000 US$)			% of total state gtants	Cost per student
		State	Municipality	Total		
Ordinary education:						
1. Basic school (grades 1-9)	1 038 000[2]	2 024.0	..	..	60.00	3 887
2. Upper-secondary school (both general and vocational)	235 000	532.0	..	..	16.26	4 278
Special provisions:						
3. Special education in ordinary schools	232 000[3]	(460.0)[6]	..	..	(13.79)[6]	..
4. Nomad schools[1]	190	2.1	-	2.1	0.06	11 822
5. Swedish schools abroad	1 100	2.3	-	2.3	0.07	1 909[7]
6. Schools for deaf and blind students[1]	830	21.4	-	21.4	0.64	25 208
7. Schools for mentally retarded[5]	14 600	63.7	79.0	142.7	1.91	..
8. Approved schools (earlier correction schools)[1]	530	34.8	-	34.8	1.04	6 657
9. Home language teaching for immigrants	25 000	30.7	30.4	61.1	0.92	2 438
10. Introductory courses for young immigrants	..	1.2	..	..	0.04	..
11. Auxiliary Swedish for immigrant students	30 000	23.0	22.7	45.7	0.69	1 523
12. Vocational courses for unemployed youth	12 000	8.4	..	..	0.25	..
13. Economic study assistance in upper secondary schools	..	127.0	-	127.0	3.82	..

1) Including board and lodge. 2) Including students under special provisions No.3 3) 14.000 of these in special remedial classes, remaining 218.000 in ordinary classes but with co-ordinated special instruction. 4) 3.000 "year places", which gives 12.000 places in 10-week courses. 5) Has 14.600 students in compulsory school ages, plus 11.500 adults in education programmes. 6) Makes part of costs for basic school (row No.1). 7) Private schools with state subsidiaries.

A recently created special provision are the state grants for home language teaching of immigrants (row No. 9), the introductory courses, mainly during the summer vacation, of young immigrants (row No. 10) and teaching of "Swedish as a foreign language" to immigrants (row No. 11). As can be seen in column 7 the cost per student in these special provisions are fairly high, considering that they have to be added to the individual costs for ordinary teaching (rows No. 1 and No. 2).

Another recent special provision are the short courses for unemployed youth under 19 years of age (row No. 12), voluntary for the students and paid for by the state and the municipality. (From 19 years they can get support through the general unemployment support).

The last provision in the table, economic study assistance in upper-secondary school (row No. 13), aims at helping students in sparsely populated areas for travelling and boarding in upper-secondary education. This is one of the largest special provisions.

The total state school budget was 14.5 million Swedish Crowns (=US$ 3.4 M) in the fiscal year 1978/79. This includes a number of items not listed in the table, such as central and regional administration, inservice training of school personnel, educational research and development, building subsidies and adult education. The proportions of this total school budget, especially designed as special provisions, are seemingly low (column 6). Yet the provision per single student comes up to relatively high (column 7).

In recent years there has been growing clamour for increased local influence over the school system. According to a recent act by Parliament greater freedom will be allowed at the local level to shape the school system within limits defined by central governmental authorities (see 6.2. below). The task to uphold the principles of uniform schooling and equivalent standards will from now on to a greater extent depend on the school staff.

6. PARTICIPATION AND CODETERMINATION IN EDUCATION

6.1. Administrative Responsibility

One of the more important questions of educational policy in Sweden during the 1950s concerned administrative responsibility for the educational system. The compulsory school was previously municipal. The secondary school was a state school. Municipal secondary schools gradually arose alongside the state ones, providing instruction right up to the matriculation examination. Vocational education was mainly a municipal concern from the start (sometimes within a county council) and was extended for students at the same age level as the state-run secondary schools.

A series of decisions by Parliament in the 1950s and 1960s brought the entire reformed educational system from pre-school up to university level under municipal responsibility. This was balanced, however, by a closely regulated system of state subsidies and the fact that teachers on permanent staff, municipal school managers and school superintendents were appointed by state authorities, including the County School Boards which were state regional authorities set up in 1958. Some schools also remained under state administration. These were certain special schools for handicapped children. Certain private schools at the secondary level, also including company training, have been of relatively limited extent in Sweden. In all, less than two percent of the students at the compulsory schooling and upper-secondary level have gone to private or company schools.

One of the most important results of the school reform was thus that the school system was munipalised. This was seen as an essential step towards democratization of education through greater local influence. The balance between state-central and municipal-local influence on development and design of the educational system has been a much debated subject in the 1960s and 1970s. It has been considered a duty of the state and its institutions to give the educational system a uniform structure. Uniformity has been regarded as a condition of equal educational standards. By and large, uniformity has been attained. As a result of the reforms of the 1950s and 1960s, urban and rural districts have got the same school structure, densely and sparsely populated areas have got schools that provide the same competence.

6.2. Internal Working of the School

It was generally felt in Sweden in the 1970s that educational policy measures adopted to iron out the negative differences in student performance - or at least reduce some obvious student shortcomings in knowledge and skills - have proved to be of limited effect when they were given the form of generally operative rules.

These rules were mainly concentrated in measures to assist those with low performance and the handicapped. They have allowed the establishment of special classes and special clinics in the school (see 5.3. above). By the mid-1970s, different forms of special instruction were so developed in the compulsory school that there was one full-time special teacher to 3-4 ordinary teachers. A serious discussion was started at this time about the suitability of the central rules and guidelines for these forms of special provisions. A special state committee was appointed in 1971 to enquire into the internal work of the school, the SIA Committee (Sw.abbr. for "Skolans Inre Arbete")

The extensive development of the Swedish school has provided greater opportunities for education for all, regardless of social background,

geographical area and sex. After the external organization had been built up, attention was now directed towards the internal work of the school, the conditions for learning, design of the learning process, and the working environment.

The SIA Committee presented its proposals to the Government in 1974. Decisions were taken by Parliament in 1976 and 1978 after the proposals had been discussed in a lively and wide-ranging debate and circulated to appropriate organization for comment, this providing a basis for the bill introduced by the Government. The decision was also founded on the results of an enquiry into children's leasure activities.

The decisions primarily concern revised forms of work and a shift in responsibility for school activity from the state to the municipalities and the individual schools. Greater local influence and a larger measure of democracy in school should provide greater opportunities for those most closely affected to influence the work of the school, particularly in regard to forming the working environment and to assisting students with difficulties.

The decision by Parliament can be summarised as a set of principals under the following headings:

- Revised methods and forms of work
- Guidelines for revision of the basic school curriculum
- Continuous school day - more varied content in school work
- Greater contact between the school and working life
- New system of state subsidies permitting decentralisation and greater local decision-making
- Student democracy - new forms for making decisions permitting greater student participation and greater co-operation.

The students should be provided with opportunities for meaningful activity during lengthy breaks and other intervals. School activity should thus not be limited to lessons. These should instead alternate

and be tied in with other activities in co-operation with associations, clubs and local authorities. The term "school-day" should embrace different forms of activity. Putting a rich and varied content into the school day will be an important task at the local level.

It is therefore important to have an overall grasp of the different local resources, both in school and the local community, with regard to co-operation with other municipal institutions and after-school centres ("fritidshem"), neighbourhood centres ("kvartersgård"), schools of music, nurseries, libraries, sports grounds, park playgrounds, therapeutical services etc.

The overall objective of general leisure time activity should be:

- to meet the students' need for activity, social contact and cultural stimulation
- to desseminate knowledge about the activity of clubs and associations, culture and recreational activity in the municipality/local centre, and provide the stimulus for involvement and active participation
- to try particularly to interest those with low motivation and those who are passive, in order to meet their need for stimulation when the school day is over
- to offer a secure care for students, especially the younger ones
- to create a natural and relaxed contact with adults having experience of working environments outside the school
- to interest students of different ages and sex in the same groups and activities.

The reason for involving associations and clubs in the work of the school is that student involvement in such organizations means joining together around an idea, democratic training, comradeship and solidarity between people. It is therefore important that these organizations are allowed to conduct their activity with their own aims in view and

be responsible themselves for recruiting instructors, for the form activities take and the methods used. The municipalities should therefore support and stimulate them in their work at school and with its students.

Decentralization is a cardinal point in this SIA Act. Responsibility for the internal working of the school should rest on the individual school and the municipality. This responsibility includes organization of measures to assist and support students with low performance or who require support and stimulation in some other way or for some other reason.

The Act means that decisions on putting students into different kinds of classes and the allocation of funds for regular students and for students with special requirements, essentially rests with the individual municipality. The same is true of the teachers who work for different groups of students.

This change is taking place partly through an alteration from 1978 in the regulations for state subsidies to the municipalities. A distinguishing feature of the previous system was that state subsidies were ear-marked for certain ends. The subsidy was closely tied to the reaching resources. These in turn were based on organization, form and volume of instruction. The general operating subsidy to the compulsory school was thus calculated according to the number of established posts as headmaster, director of studies and teacher. In addition to this, state subsidies were paid for certain special purposes.

Under the new regulations, a certain number of students at each school unit gives a basic allocation. In addition, a supplementary allocation is made according to the total number of compulsory school students in the municipality. There are also state subsidies for certain other costs incurred in running the compulsory school, e.g. native language instruction and extra-curricular activity during the continuous school day.

The new construction, which was started in 1978, means that regional and local school authorities, headmasters, teachers and others working in this field have greater freedom and responsibility to allocate the resources on the basis of the goals, guidelines, timetables and curricula laid down by the central authorities, in practical application in the field, without being bound by directives in every detail. So far only parts of the "SIA school" have been realized.

6.3. Codetermination of Teachers

The SIA Act thus transferred certain responsibility from the central level to regional and local levels. It is then a question of which groups have influence over which questions and in what forms. One factor governing the teachers' influence is the Act on the Joint Regulation of Working Life, which came into force in 1977. The Act applies to all employees. It gives the employee the right to negotiate through his or her union and reach agreements on conditions of work, at the same time that the employer is obliged to provide information and enter into negotiations when changes are planned in the employees' conditions of work. The Act has helped strengthen the influence of teachers and other staff categories on decisions within the educational system, even if decisions on educational policy are always incumbent upon the state and municipality authorities.

For the moment, experience of the application of the Act in the educational system is limited. It is likely to take some time before it is clear where the line is drawn between general interest and the special interest of unions and other groups concerned, between what can be decided by political decisions and what can be decided by negotiation and agreement.

6.4. Participation of Parents

The participation of parents in the work of the school also takes somewhat more forms now than previously. The traditional bodies for co-operation between the home and school are known as Home and School Associations, which normally are directed at the parents of all the students. Their activity is largely based on the efforts of a class representative, representing the parents in the separate classes. They can arrange meetings between the class teacher and parents. The students often take part in these class meetings as well.

Other examples of collaboration between school and parents are general parents meetings for a certain school level or grade, separate discussions between the teacher and the parents of each student, and what are known as "listening days" when parents are allowed to visit the school while instruction is in progress.

As opposed to the school staff, who have opportunities for influencing their conditions of work through the Act on the Joint Regulation of Working Life, there is no such regulation for students and parents. The goals for influence from these groups are contained in the Education Act, but the forms this influence should take are not yet regulated.

The Ministry of Education has proposed that local consultative and management committees should be set up at individual schools. They should have the right of decision in certain matters, while in others they are conceived of as having more of a deliberate and consultative function. The proposal has been sent for comment to the authorities concerned. Some criticism of this proposal has been raised, especially from the teacher unions. So far no decision has been taken about these committees.

6.5. Student Participation

The Education Act and the School Statute of 1962 state in general terms that suitable provision is to be made to enable students to participate in the shaping of school activities. The formal structure of this participation is defined in one respect; every upper-secondary school must have a joint committee comprising the headmaster, two teachers (appointed by the teaching staff), two students (appointed by the students) and two other members (appointed by LEA).

The joint committee is an advisory body. Its task is to work for effective co-operation, good order and a pleasant atmosphere in school. According to recommendations issued by the NBE, joint committee activities should include the following:

a) Deliberations on matters concerning school comfort, co-operation, rules of order and discipline within the individual school, and efforts in all these respects to establish good conditions at the school.

b) Comments on rules of order drafted by the headmaster for his management area.

c) Co-operation with various school officers, with the parents of students and with child and youth welfare authorities within the municipality, and general efforts to establish a positive relationship between the school and the community at large.

When questions arise concerning the suspension or expulsion of a student from school, a special investigation has to be made by the joint committee. Depending on the nature of the business involved, representatives of school management, the school nurse, the school psychologist and the school welfare officer can be summoned to take part in discussions, though not in decision making.

In recent years joint committees have also been set up as a result of local initiatives at most basic schools (ages 7-15 years), although the statutory provisions concerning joint committees do not apply to these schools.

The general goals and guidelines of the curricula state repeatedly that students are to play an active part in the planning of activities, among other things by attending meetings of the joint organizations of teachers. Two such organizations are compulsory to the teachers. These are 1) the class conference, and 2) the subject conference, comprising all the teachers in a school who teach a particular subject, irrespective of the levels at which they do so.

Since 1978, all primary and lower secondary classes in the basic school also have a class council consisting of the class teacher and the students, for discussing matters of common interest to the class. The influence exerted by joint councils and class councils is often determined by local factors. In some schools they appear to have contributed actively to increasing student involvement and influence on the way the school operates. In other schools it is claimed, mainly by the students themselves, that they lack any real influence.

7. CONNECTION BETWEEN SCHOOL, WORKING LIFE AND SOCIETY AT LARGE

7.1. The Compulsory School

The ambition to get a close connection of the new nine-year compulsory school to society at large was expressed primarily in the revised timetables and curricula. Not only were the usual school subjects strengthened, English was introduced as compulsory for all. In the upper grades options of a second foreign language and a set of so-called practical subjects were given. Instruction in social science subjects was increased, from the local studies of the lowest grades to orientation in questions concerning Swedish and international society in the highest grades. Civic studies were allotted a specified number of hours from grade 4 onwards throughout the school. Study visites to various public institutions were introduced in the 1962 compulsory school curriculum as a compulsory feature.

The link with the working world was given natural expression in the final year of the new school. Vocational practice for students in the last grade was included in preparatory vocational instruction during the experimental period in the 1950s. In grade 8, i.e. the year before final division into separate lines of study, students taking non-theoretically biassed studies could have 4-8 weeks' practical vocational orientation in local industry and commerce.

Reorganization of study division in grade 9 from 1962, when Parliament took its final decision on the new school and its organization in the final grade, brought a number of changes in the connection with society and working life. Instruction in social science including

theoretical study and vocational orientation, was left in all essentials. Practical vocational orientation in industry and commerce was made a maximum of three weeks, but in return it included all students in grade 8. Previously, those choosing theoretical subjects had not had any vocational practice.

The change in the system of differentiation in the compulsory school from 1962 to 1969 has already been mentioned (3.2. above). As a result of dropping the division in the final year from 1969, the three weeks' practical vocational work and study visits were for the most part postponed until grade 9, as it would no longer be followed by division into different lines of study.

A great responsibility for the connection with society and working life within the compulsory school has fallen upon the vocational guidance teachers. There were such teachers in all compulsory schools with grades 7-9 right up to 1969. The majority of them were class teachers who had undergone further training. They both taught social science, including study and vocational orientation, and arranged temporary trainee positions in industry and commerce for students in practical vocational orientation. This work was facilitated by the fact that they normally carried out half of their duties at the local employment services office. As a result of the 1969 revision of the compulsory school curriculum, one feature of which was abolition of the division into lines of study in grade 9, part of the responsibility for study and vocational guidance has been transferred to the upper secondary-school. Both schools, however, keep their special officials in this field..

In general terms , it can be said that instruction on society and the world of work in the compulsory school was marked during the 1950s and 1960s by an endeavour to incorporate broader orientation in this field within the school programme and with the school as an institution.

The school was furnished with it and was essentially responsible for it. In part, developments during the 1970s have been different. Not least as a result of public debate on "deschooling" and the school's supposed isolation, a greater amount of instruction has begun to take place in the community outside the school. Thus if the connection with society and working life was marked during the 1950s and 1960s by an endeavour towards "assimilation" with the school, the 1970s are characterised by "dissimilation", i.e. a transfer to the community at large of educational areas and responsibility previously regarded as the exclusive tasks of school and teachers.

7.2. Post-Compulsory Schooling

Until 1971 Sweden had a large number of schools for the post-compulsory ages 16-19 years. These schools could be grouped as follows:

- Upper-secondary schools (the academic "gymnasium" for students aged 16-19)
- continuation school (two year courses in social, economic and technical studies for students aged 16-18)
- vocational schools, schools of agriculture, schools of forestry, rural schools of home economics (courses for those aged 16 and upwards, of varying length).

According to a decision taken by the Swedish Parliament in 1968, these schools ceased to exist as three distinct types of school with separate organizations and objectives. They were replaced by a single, integrated upper-secondary school.

This new school is a natural continuation of the compulsory comprehensive school, which the students complete at the age of 16. The integrated upper-secondary school offers twenty-two lines of study, to be pursued for either two or three years. In technical studies there is also a four-year line. There are also a number of special courses of varying duration.

The range of lines and special courses varies from district to district. The directive issued for planning work on the upper-secondary school system laid down that efforts should be made to include the majority of study alternatives in every upper-secondary school area, but it would not be possible to provide the full range everywhere.

The reasons for integration of different kinds of post-compulsory education into one kind of school were mainly three. Firstly, there were financial reasons: administrative costs could be reduced, buildings, special facilities and expensive technical equipment could be used more effectively. Secondly, there were educational reasons: a better range of teaching posts, so that more qualified teachers would be available for more subjects, students could be taught by the teacher best qualified for the work at hand. Thirdly, there were social reasons, and these in many respects seen as the most important. The partition before 1971 into separate institutions was both a reflection and a cause of certain social attitudes. The distinction between practical and academic education was and had always been an artificial one. Many people credited academic subjects with a superior status to the practical ones. It was hoped that the introduction of a single school would eliminate or at least reduce the social connections attached to different subjects and make them equally attractive. Only then, as it was said, would it be possible for the individual student to choose a line of studies on the basis of his or her wishes, interest and aptitudes.

The different sectors of upper-secondary education has been separately housed. The physical segregation of the academic and the practical studies had produced one-sided groups of students bearing little or no resemblance to the social realities of subsequent working life. This physical segregation has since 1971 been gradually diminished and sometimes fully eliminated.

The change in 1971 aimed at introducing a broader concept of upper-secondary education. It also aimed at a substantial widening of the very

concept of upper-secondary education. This education, Parliament said, should no longer be restricted to academic studies serving to prepare students for further education at universities and colleges. It should also include technical and vocational education. The segregation of theoretical and practical education was no longer accepted. The educational decisions of the individual student should be less binding and final than they used to be earlier.

Upper-secondary studies in the "integrated gymnasium" from 1971 can be grouped into three main sectors:

- Arts and social study routes comprise the following: two-year home economics line, two-year nursing line, two-year music line, two-year social line, three-year arts line and three-year social science line.

- Economic study routes comprise the following: two-year distribution and clerical line, two-year economics line and three-year economics line.

- Technical and scientific study routes comprise the following: two-year lines for clothing manufacturing, food manufacturing, workshop techniques, motor engineering, woodwork, building and construction, electro-telecommunications, process engineering, forestry, agriculture, a two year technical line, a three year science line and a four year technology line.

Fourteen of the twentytwo lines are mainly vocational or pre-vocational, while the remaining eight have a general or academic outline.

With the introduction of the integrated upper-secondary school, vocational education was given a new content and organization. The salient point of the new organization became as follows:

- All lines replacing vocational school are now of two years' duration. A number of special courses is also provided.

- Students following the vocational lines are given a broader basic education than previously. Specialization proceeds successively.

- More scope is given to the so-called general subjects.

Specialization is effected gradually by means of sub-alternatives and, in certain cases, "variants". This means that more definite decisions by the students about their course studies can be taken at later stage. It also means that they will be given a more allround education, making it easier for them to adjust to changes in the labour market.

The new vocational education is based on the so-called block principle, whereby similar occupations are merged into larger vocational sectors. The basic block, i.e. the initial course of studies, contains items common to the entire sector. Studies are then gradually specialized in keeping with the character of the various occupations.

One important innovation is the great increase in the study of so-called general subjects included in vocational education. Swedish, labour market orientation and gymnastics are compulsory for all lines. Students also have to choose at least one of several optional extra subjects of a general character. These are English, German, French, civics, religious knowledge, psychology, mathematics , consumer education, music or art. A student can also dispense with one vocational subject in order to study subjects belonging to another line within the upper-secondary school. This form of substitution, which may not comprise more than 12 periods per week, is generally confined to the second year. The subjects thus chosen must fit into the general pattern of studies of the student concerned.

Labour market orientation is a new subject included in the vocational lines. This subject is designed to provide the students with a general

background to their subsequent careers, e.g. through information on the labour market and working life. Students are also introduced to social economic affairs, trade unions and other labour market organizations, industrial safety, industrial democracy, personnel welfare and other matters concerning joint determination and co-operation.

At present the integrated upper-secondary school can take all students finishing their compulsory education at 16. The number of students attending the upper-secondary school now corresponds to nearly 90 percent of the year group. This means that the frequency of upper-secondary studies has more than doubled during the last ten-year period.

Until recently the most popular lines have been the three-year academic lines, traditionally preparing for university studies. An equalization between academic and technical-vocational studies seems to have come. Certain vocational lines, i.e. nursing, electrotelecommunications and agriculture now have clearly more applicants per student place than the traditional "pre-university" lines. Due to the competition in popular lines it is harder to get places in the nursing line and the electro-telecommunication line (both vocational) than in the science line and the arts line (both academic).

One reason for this change of the traditional status of lines is that the entrance requirements to universities and other kinds of higher studies were changed in 1976. It is no longer necessary to have a traditional three-year academic upper-secondary school ("gymnasium") in order to go to university. Any two-year upper-secondary course is sufficient, even vocational, provided that this course includes Swedish and English. This gives general qualification to higher studies, which is enough for the majority of university courses. In certain kinds of higher studies, i.e. to become a teacher or a doctor, it is necessary also to have a set of special qualifications, usually academic subjects from the three-year courses.

A number of evaluation studies of the upper-secondary school have been made. These cannot be reviewed here; only the general statement that it

mostly works well. The fear, very often heard when the integrated upper-secondary school started, that the quality of the vocational education might be poorer, is hardly heard nowadays. It has been found, however, that the integrated upper-secondary school is a fairly expensive kind of school. One reason for this is the investments in school buildings of a specialized kind, investments in machines, learning material and equipment. Another reason is the costs for teachers. The student/teacher ratio is 12:1 for the Swedish upper-secondary school as a whole.

7.3. Adult Education and Higher Education

Earlier adult education was provided for through arrangements like folk high schools, study circles and labour market training. As a consequence, however, of the reforms of compulsory education and of schooling on the post-compulsory level during the 1950s and 1960s a series of subsequent reforms were decided upon and implemented regarding higher education and other forms of adult education.

Parliament decided in 1967, that provision of adult education should be a responsibility for the municipal authorities. Gradually a system of "adult schools" has been organized in almost all municipalities. These give part-time courses and full-time courses, in general and academic subjects as well as in technical-vocational subjects. Most students take regular upper-secondary course in single subjects. There are now more students in these kinds of schools than in general upper-secondary schools, yet most of them study short courses and only on a part-time basis.

Post-secondary education at universities and other kinds of tertiary training institutes has, in the 1970s, gone through a reform which has been almost as total as the preceding school reforms. One significant change was the introduction of new admission rules, on an experimental basis from 1972 and permanently from 1977. According to these rules every programme in the upper-secondary school (in some cases after

supplementary studies in Swedish and English), as well as other studies with equivalent aims and lengths, satisfies the general admission requirements to higher education (7.2. above) as does a person who is at least 25 years old and has four years or more of occupational experience, regardless of schooling. The new rules mean that, in principle, every adult is formally entitled to begin higher studies, and the expanded system of adult education provides genuine opportunities for most people to acquire the previous knowledge required for higher education. These rules guarantee admission to applicant categories with different backgrounds, in accordance with proportional quotas. In addition to school marks, working experience also entitles a person to qualification points. A governmental ad hoc committee, the 1968 Education Commission (Sw.abbr. U68), proposed in 1973 that the distinction between academic and non-academic post-secondary education should no longer be applied. Rather it should be replaced by a common fundamental approach to the activities and planning of the whole post-secondary field. At the same time the higher education system and its various parts should, within this common approach continue to preserve and develope their original special functions. All undergraduate studies in the higher education system should prepare a person for a future occupation, even if this was not to be taken as its only aim. Moreover, all higher education should have links with research, even if this cannot always take place in traditional forms through local and personal links.

In 1975, Parliament approved the U68 principles for a new higher education system. Within the new structure, the faculties - bearers of the academic nucleus of the previous post-secondary system - lost their role in undergraduate education. Instead, undergraduate studies are organized in programmes grouped into five vocational training sectors (technical, administrative-economic-social welfare, medical-paramedical, teaching and cultural-informational), as well, of course, as constituting single courses.

Since 1977, when the new organizational system was implemented and

responsibility for courses was shifted to the individual institutions of higher education, a large number of new courses have been started, responding to a variety of needs. Development of the contents of study programmes and their structure has thus been a necessary complement to the new admission rules when it comes to attracting new categories of students. Even "technical-vocational higher education" courses running 1-1½ years and intended for skilled workers in the engineering and other industries have been established. The new admission rules, however, have not made admission altogether open. Certain sectors have a restricted admission. In 1979, Parliament decided that the same planning system framework is to be applied to the whole field of higher education, i.e. institutes for training of teachers, social workers, artists, nurses etc., as well as universities. This makes it possible to limit the intake to any free study programme or single course.

8 TOWARDS RECURRENT EDUCATION

During the 1960s, the general trend in Swedish education was towards a lengthening of the period young people spent in school, an increasing of the general subjects available there, and a postponement of specialization and vocational orientation. At the same time, adult education in its various forms grew into a necessary supplement to the schooling provided to the young. During the 1970s, one topic of educational policy discussions has been how to achieve a good balance between educational programmes during different periods of people's lives, viewed both from the perspective of the individual and of society. An approach has emerged which involves a conscious alternation between periods of education and periods of gainful employment or other activity. The parliamentary decision of 1975 on reforming the higher education also states that educational planning as a whole should be based on the principle of recurrent education. This signifies an abandonment to the belief that the education should preferably be concentrated into a continuous period during youth, which is then followed by an uninterrupted period of gainful employment until retirement.

There are a number of signs that a pattern of recurrent education is emerging. Of the nearly 90 percent of each age bracket who now continue to upper-secondary school after compulsory schooling, many first take a year or more off and then resume their studies. This is the case with about 15-20 percent of all students. In other words, they themselves decide in this way to alternate education and gainful employment.

There are reasons to encourage such a trend by means of various educational and labour market policy measures. Municipal adult education

has also created increased opportunities to alternate or otherwise combine education and gainful employment.

Corresponding tendencies can be noted in adult education programmes at the folk high schools. The number of full-year students at these institutions has not increased over the past ten years. On the other hand, since 1970 the number taking short courses has increased from about 3.000 to about 150.000 per year. A similar type of activity is the training avalaible in small programme packages at course and conference centers under the auspices of companies and organizations. This training, too, has increased noticably in scale. Programmes of these types may be regarded as building blocks in an emerging system of recurrent education. And in the regular Swedish universities the situation was changed considerably during the last years of the 1970s. About half the new students entering the open-admissions faculties of the universities were at least 25 years old, i.e. they had alternated gainful employment and education in some way. The number of part-time students at these faculties, i.e. those normally likely to combine or alternate education and gainful employment, have also grown from only about 3 percent in 1970 to more than 30 percent today. At the same faculties it had also become common for students to say they only wanted to take single courses and subjects but not work towards a full academic degree. After 1970 these students had grown from just over 10 percent to about 70 percent of annual new registrants in the open-admissions faculties.

The new rules on admissions to higher education, introduced in 1977, making adults with working experience eligible for higher education, and in which gainful employment entitles a person to additional qualifying points in the competition for places in study programmes that cannot accept all applicants, have generally meant major changes in age, knowledge and experience of those beginning higher studies. In the long run, the pattern of recurrent education now developing may change not only recruitment to higher studies, but also the content of these

studies and recruitment patterns on the labour market.

One of the purposes of recurrent education is to achieve a more vigorous interaction between the labour market and the educational system. It should become possible for upper-secondary and, above all, higher education to be increasingly based on the practical experiences of students themselves. Theoretical studies can, to a greater extent, consist of an analysis of such experiences.

Obviously, with such a trend, experience from adult education will be essential to instruction both in upper-secondary school and in higher education. The boarderlines between adult education and regular post-compulsory education are becoming more and more vague, at the same time as the need for training programmes of many different types remains strong and becomes even stronger.

Some of the trends towards recurrency in education are new and unforeseen. Yet it is apparent that in some cases these trends are strong - almost in the realm of a force of nature - and that a new policy is needed to define the problems and suggest solutions to questions like:

How should different kinds of now existing post-compulsory education be organized to cater for the new requirements? Who should be responsible for financing and administrating this education? How can industry and commerce be made aware of their responsibility for the continuing education of the individual even when it does not appear to be in the immediate interest of the firm? How are courses to be constructed to suit the working life with which they alternate and how are intervals between studies to be filled with work that will benefit the studies pursued later on?

Three important acts were passed by the Swedish Parliament in 1975. One act states the right of employees to be free for studies and the

right to come back to employment after these studies. According to a second act adult students are entitled to special subsidies, corresponding to a major part of a regular employment salary. And a third decision by Parliament implies that the development of curricula and programmes for labour market training shall be adjusted to the principles of recurrent education.

Major questions remain to be answered and they can no longer be ignored. A comprehensive policy for education and employment is needed. The next educational reform might in fact be so thoroughgoing as to constitute a reform of society in a wider sense. Partial solutions are already in the pipeline, but as yet it remains unclear who can and should assume responsibility for more integral solutions. One final and essential question in this whole complex is whether a freely emergent system of recurrent education will bring Sweden closer to the equality and the democracy that have been the guiding star of its postwar education policy or whether it will constitute a new mechanism of social segregation and stratification.

9 SUMMARY

This paper presents a descriptive analysis of a number of measures taken in Sweden during the last three decades to democratize education. The following changes have been seen as important indicators of democratization:

(1) Compulsory schooling has been extended. The school leaving age has gradually been raised from 13 to 16 years of age for all students.

(2) Access to education has been increased. Upper-secondary voluntary education, which earlier could take only 15 percent of each age-group, now takes over 80 percent of the students up to the age of 18.

(3) Diversification of students into different fields of study has been postponed till after the school leaving age. All students remain in heterogeneously composed classes until the age of 16. Exceptions to this rule are the students' options of elective subjects during grades 7-9 encompassing some 15 percent of the timetable in these grades. Also students choose between an easy and a difficult course in English and Mathematics. Regardless of choice of subjects and courses the student is entitled to choose any kind of post-compulsory course after the compulsory school.

(4) The choice of courses, subjects or streams (in post-compulsory school) has been made free for the student. The school provides students with information and guidance but cannot impose any kind of specialization against the will of the student and his parents.

(5) Co-education of boys and girls has been introduced altogether, and timetables, subjects and courses have been made the same for both sexes, i.e. domestic science and child care for boys as well as for girls, woodwork and textile work for both. In the free choice of options and streams, however, boys and girls have mostly continued to choose according to traditional sex roles. The principle of free choice therefore seems, this far, to have slowed down the movement towards equal opportunity for the sexes.

(6) The school system has been comprehensivized and is now the same for all students under 16. The schools are municipal schools and they take 98 percent of the students. The upper-secondary school has become "integrated", with academic, general, technical and vocational courses in the same kind of school.

(7) Through a system of combined financing from state and local taxes the external structure of schools has been made the same in all regions and districts. Regional and local differences in school standard (including student achievement) have been reduced considerably.

(8) Democratization has been practiced in a way which has given special treatment of students with special needs. Extra resources are now spent on special training and support for physically and mentally handicapped children, immigrants, unemployed youth and students with long distance to schools.

(9) State schools have almost altogether been municipalized. Responsibility for primary and secondary schools, including vocational training, has been given to local school boards and a locally organized school administration.

(10) Codetermination by teachers in school administration has been

increased through a new law on Joint Regulation of Working Life, which gives teachers and other employees at school the right to negotiate with their employers about their working conditions.

(11) Participation by parents has been organized through local Home and School Association. A governmental proposal on establishment of consultative and management committees for each school has so far not been carried through.

(12) Student participation is realized through an advisory Joint Student Committee for every secondary school and for most basic schools. Other kinds of voluntary student councils are also organized.

(13) Attempts to associate educational institutes to working life and to society at large have been made. Some of these are;

(a) a modernized curriculum with introduction all through the school of subjects like civil education, economy and working life orientation,

(b) introduction at the secondary levels of study and vocational guidance by specialists at school,

(c) vocational orientation in work outside of school for all students at the lower secondary level for a minimum of three weeks,

(d) longer periods of vocational practice in curricula for certain streams on the upper-secondary level,

(e) reorganization of study at the tertiary level with preparation for working life as a main objective with a system of new planning units (and no longer the traditional faculties) responsible for the organization of undergraduate studies.

(14) A number of new trends in the use of post-compulsory educational institutions have been observed recently, indicating the wish of students to combine or alternate study and work, and also indicating the need of a new joint policy and planning for both education and work.

All measures taken aim at democratizing education but also at democratizing the Swedish society at large. Some evidence is found of equalization of educational opportunities. Also between-school differences in educational standard have been reduced. Here it is clearly found, that a democratized education is only one of many prerequisites for a democratized society, although, again, the question of how a democratized educational system might create democratic individuals is not discussed.

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